



SCHOOL at the **LEGISLATURE**



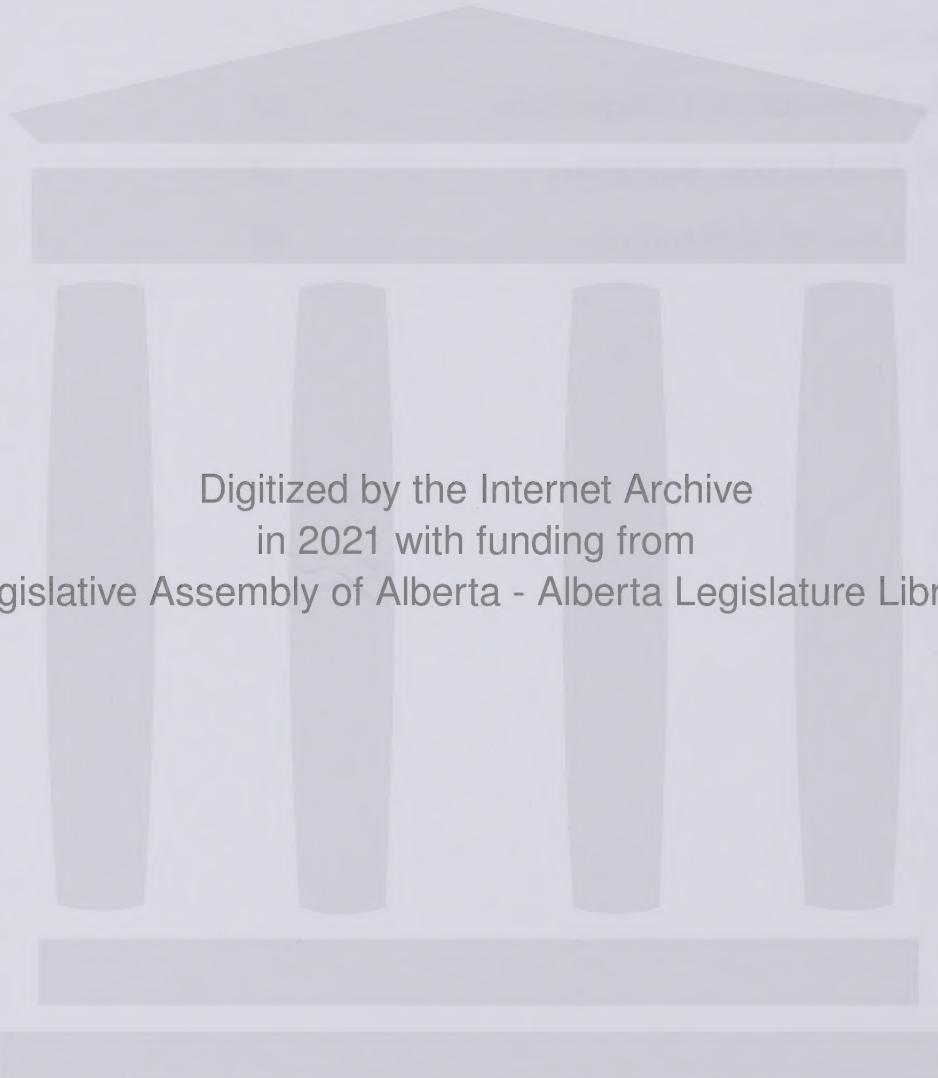
Putting Life into Learning



Report Card
2002/2003

Table of Contents

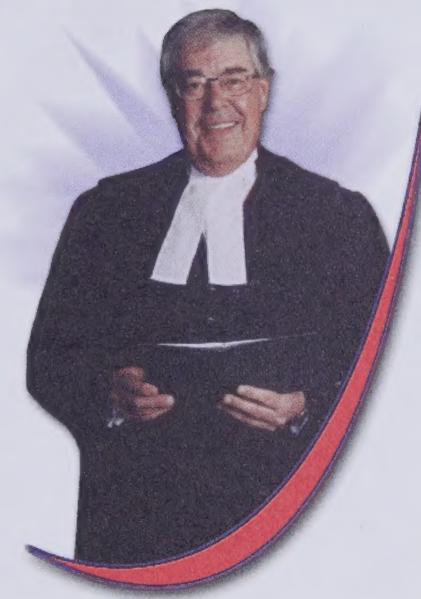
Speaker's Message	3
Program Objectives	5
Year in Review	9
Getting the Word Out	15
Dollars and Cents	19
Appendices	
A: Curriculum Connections	25
B: Evaluation Summary	29
C: Letters of Support.....	33

A faint, light-grey watermark of the Alberta Legislature building is centered in the background. The building features a prominent portico with four columns and a triangular pediment above it.

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Speaker's Message

In 1998 the Legislative Assembly embarked on an ambitious journey: to build a Legislature classroom where Grade 6 students and teachers would experience the Legislature Building as they never had before.



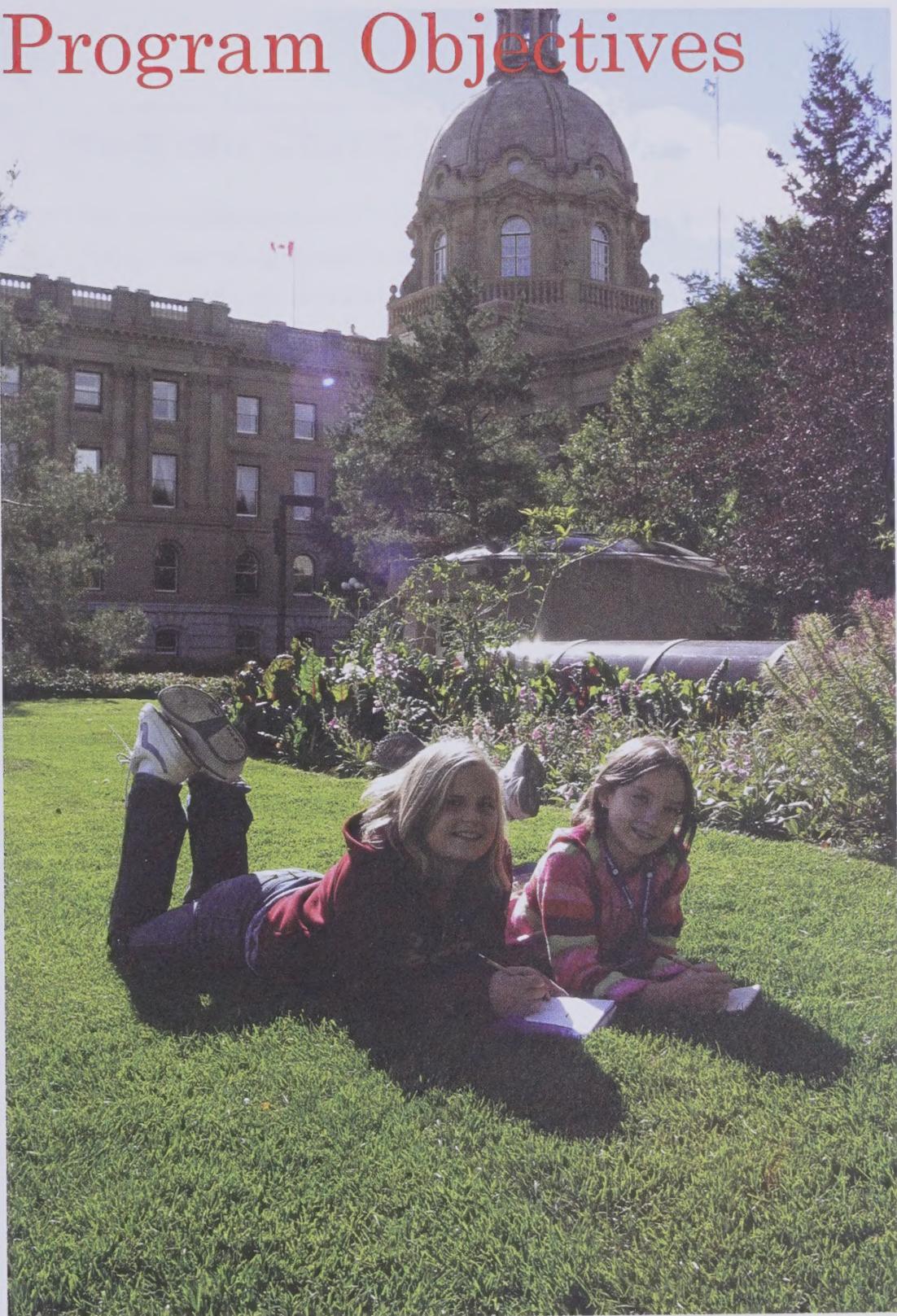
Since 1998, the program has seen a steady increase in the number of classes attending. This year more than 600 students attended School-at-the-Legislature. Twenty-two classes had an intimate look at the inner workings of government and the parliamentary traditions that have guided assemblies for centuries. Through the generous support of our community partners: Capital City Savings and Credit Union and Priority Printing Ltd. as well as the commitment of Legislative Assembly staff, these students were given the opportunity to become well-informed, responsible citizens.

While this report is an account of the program's progress to date, there is something else to be found within its pages: testimonials from students, teachers and Legislative Assembly staff who have been engaged in learning.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Kowalski".

The Honourable Ken Kowalski,
MLA, Barrhead-Westlock
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly

Program Objectives



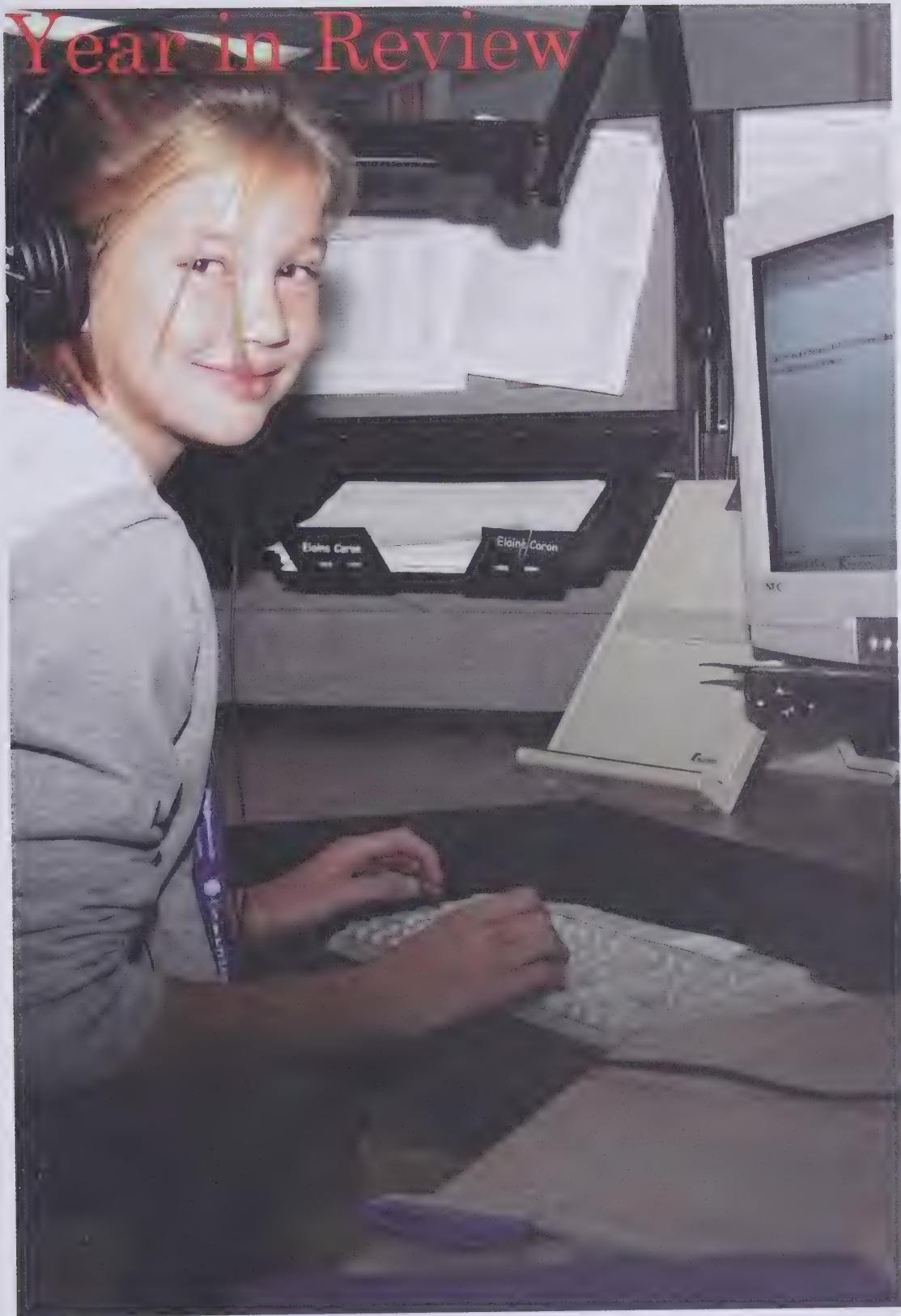
"It was valuable, both as part of the curriculum (local government) but also as a social learning opportunity."

A Grade 6 teacher

Program Objectives

- To provide students with a memorable and fun-filled learning experience of Alberta's parliamentary democratic process.
- To facilitate interdisciplinary learning experiences at the Legislature that complement the Alberta curriculum.
- To convey to the educational community and the public that the Legislature and the parliamentary process belong to them.
- To provide MLAs and Legislature staff an opportunity to participate in the learning experience of children.

Year in Review



"I do believe this is a wonderful experience. The children learned a great deal about government."

A parent participant

School-at-the-Legislature involved 22 classes, over 600 Grade 6 students, during the 2002–03 school year. The Legislature community has embraced the program, volunteering time for student interviews so students can come away with an in-depth and hands-on experience of the parliamentary process.

In August 2002, the Assembly held a two-day workshop in the School-at-the-Legislature classroom to prepare teachers for the program. The workshop gave teachers an opportunity to develop a support network for sharing ideas and a lesson plan for the week. It also allowed teachers to become familiar with the program, scheduling and site layout.

SATL Enrollment

See tables 1 and 2 for a list of schools and the number of participants enrolled in the program. A few schools sent more than one class.

Table 1: Participation

	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Classes	5	7	20	22
Students	123	195	502	619
Teachers	6	8	25	30
Volunteers	16	26	123	153
Total	145	229	650	802

Table 2:
Participating Elementary Schools for
2002/03

School	Class Numbers	Total Student Numbers	Area
Avonmore	1	31	Edmonton
Delton	2	55	Edmonton
Ekota	1	32	Edmonton
Eleanor Hall	1	23	Clyde
Forest Heights	2	66	Edmonton
Fulton Place	1	32	Edmonton
Greenfield	1	32	Edmonton
Hussar	1	19	Hussar
John A. McDougall	1	26	Edmonton
Julia Kiniski	2	49	Edmonton
Keenooshayo	2	43	Edmonton
Leo Nickerson	1	30	St. Albert
Meadowlark	2	62	Edmonton
Tipaskan	1	35	Edmonton
Velma E. Baker	3	84	Edmonton
15 Schools	22 Classes	619 Students	

Let's Talk!

The Members and staff of the Assembly have been involved in the program since the beginning and continue to share their knowledge and experience with students. Students book interviews to learn about the specific roles and responsibilities of offices and departments that constitute the Legislative community.

The students' contact list includes the Lieutenant Governor, elected officials, Legislative Assembly Office staff, members of the press gallery, and grounds and security staff at the Legislature.

My Interview Checklist



- The Lieutenant Governor's Office
- The Speaker's Office
- The Premier's Office
- Government Members
- Liberal Opposition Members
- New Democrat Opposition Members
- The Clerk of the Assembly
- The Clerk Assistant
- Financial Management/Admin. Services
- Human Resource Services
- Information Systems Services
- Legislature Library
- Parliamentary Counsel
- Public Information Branch & Hansard
- The Sergeant-at-Arms & Visitor Services



The Press Gallery



Legislature Building and Pedway Security



Department of Infrastructure

Getting the Word Out



“Yes, students learn. But we learn too. And that’s a good thing.”

A Legislative Assembly employee

Getting the word out

The Legislative Assembly has promoted the program through mailouts, teacher workshops, advertisements and the program Web site. This past year we vigorously promoted the program to rural schools by sending mailouts to those that have visited the Legislature for one-day field trips.

Classroom presentations by community partner, Capital City Savings and Credit Union, were scheduled for each participating class.

Journals promoting the program were distributed to each student attending School-at-the-Legislature.

The School-at-the-Legislature program Web page on the Legislative Assembly Web site was updated after each school visit. The site not only includes information about the program and how to apply, but also includes our community partners and testimonials from students and teachers.

New sponsorship was also pursued.

Dollars and Cents



"I remember almost everything we did because you made it fun and memorable."

A Grade 6 student

Dollars and Cents

The School-at-the-Legislature program is funded by its community partners, whose support has been instrumental to the success of the program. See Table 3 for a list of program revenues and expenses.

Table 3: 2002–03 Program Budget

	2002/03 Projected	2002/03 Actual
Revenue		
Shaw Communications	\$ 25,000	\$ 0
Capital City Savings	25,000	26,533
Legislative Assembly of Alberta	0	25,134
Program Fees	3,000	9,750
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>\$ 53,000</i>	<i>\$ 61,417</i>
Expenses		
Co-ordinator Salary		\$ 41,740
Contributions		6,772
Postage and Freight		83
Telecommunications	0	12
Other Labour and Services	47,000	6,090
Travel	1,000	6,485
Hosting	1,000	227
Office Administration	1,000	8
Advertising	3,000	0
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$ 53,000</i>	<i>\$ 61,417</i>

Notes:

- These figures cover the Fiscal year April 1, 2002 to March 31, 2003.
- The School-at-the-Legislature program ran from September 1, 2002 to June 30, 2003.
- Shaw Communications discontinued their sponsorship.
- Capital City Savings contributed \$1,533 towards the student journals.

Appendices



“The only thing that I would change would be to stay here longer.”

Appendix A: Curriculum Connection

The School-at-the-Legislature program is closely connected to the Grade 6 curriculum. While Social Studies and Language Arts are the two most common curriculum links, the program also provides room for Math, Science, Physical Education and Art connections.

Along with an application form, teachers are asked to submit a lesson plan outlining how they will take advantage of the week on site and how their experience at the Legislature relates to classroom work throughout the year. Some of those ideas are included here.

Social Studies

- Participating in a parliamentary debate.
- Studying the three levels of government.
- Learning how people take part in government, including the election process.
- Discovering how responsibilities and rights as a citizen begin at the local level.
- Creating a map of Alberta's 83 constituencies.
- Learning about the architecture of the Legislature Building.
- Comparing/contrasting how people in China and Canada meet their needs. Includes a Chinatown trip.
- Recognizing how Greece has affected western civilization through values, beliefs and ideas.

English/Language Arts

- Writing in student journals.
- Taking notes during interviews.
- Writing newspaper articles.
- Preparing reports based on interviews.
- Creating a newsletter based on the week at the Legislature.
- Finding out how the media collects and distributes information.
- Presenting information by individuals, groups, or the class.

Art

- Sketching the Legislature Building interior and exterior.
- Analyzing form in nature and in man-made objects.
- Creating newspaper collages.

Science

- Taking nature walks on the grounds or conducting an environmental audit.
- Studying the river valley ecosystem.
- Identifying trees and vegetation on the Legislature grounds.
- Studying air and flight characteristics.
- Learning how to gather and analyze evidence and how to investigate. This includes a trip to the Law Courts.

Math

- Learning how the government collects and distributes tax dollars.
- Measuring and graphing sizes and shapes on the Legislature grounds.
- Conducting a statistical analysis of budgets.

Physical Education

- Completing the Health Walk Loops in the Legislature pedway.
- Taking a self-guided tour of the Legislature grounds.
- Walking in the river valley.
- Ice skating on the Legislature Grounds in the winter.

Life Careers

- Comparing how school habits relate to the world of work.
- Learning about different occupations.

Appendix B: Evaluation Summary

Overall, response from students, teachers, MLAs and Legislative Assembly staff regarding the program has been very positive.

The following comments are based on evaluations received from students and teachers throughout the program year.

1. What do you remember the most from the week at the Alberta Legislature?

The three most common comments were:

- a) The interviews
- b) The Mock Legislature debate
- c) The tour of the Legislature

2. What were the top three things that you learned that were new and interesting?

This was more difficult to summarize, since the comments depended on the interviews each student had. Generally, the focus was on learning about the roles of government and opposition, as well as the responsibilities of MLAs and Assembly staff. A selection of comments follows.

“How a bill is passed.”

“The government is way cooler than I thought it would be.”

"How much fun it is to see Question Period."

"Sometimes Session lasts all night."

"There are lots of different jobs at the Legislature."

"How *Hansard* is made."

"I had never heard about the Speaker or Sergeant-at-Arms [before] and never thought there would be so much tradition in all the meetings ."

3. What were the top three things you didn't like?

Quite a few comments indicated that participants wanted to stay longer at the site. The three most common comments were:

- a) Not being able to meet the Premier
- b) Not enough interview time and not enough interviews
- c) Not having an opportunity to view Session

4. Is there something that you would change?

A large number of respondents indicated that they would like to spend more time on the program. Some comments follow:

"I would change the time we were there. It should be two weeks or a week and a half."

"I wish we could go see the Palm Trees."

"More time in the Legislature."

5. Was there something that you wish you had done during the week?

While this question brought out a variety of responses, quite a few students mentioned they would like to have met the Premier. A few other student responses are listed below.

“Meet the Lieutenant Governor.”

“I wish we could go see the palm trees.”

“I wish we could have all interviewed the same people.”

6. Any other suggestions or comments?

Here students were given the opportunity to comment on any aspect of the program not covered in previous questions. Some of their comments follow.

“I liked this field trip because it’s meaningful and more interesting than in school.”

“Thank you for letting us come to the Leg. It really helped me to learn more about government.”

“I like to meet all those MLAs and talk to them.”



Office of the Lieutenant Governor of Alberta
3 Floor, Legislative Building
10800 - 97 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 2B6

July 15th, 2003

*The Honourable Ken Kowalski
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta
Room 325
Legislature Building*

Dear Speaker Kowalski:

In recent years, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor has participated in The School at the Legislature Program and I have found it to be most worthwhile. The program offers Alberta students a closer, more personal look at the workings of their provincial government. Students who have visited with me have been a delight; posing questions that have been both interesting and thought provoking. For the most part, they have been well prepared and their eagerness to learn about the Office of the Lieutenant Governor apparent.

I commend you and Visitor Services on developing and offering this unique learning opportunity. The logistics of such a program in meeting the complex scheduling needs of everyone concerned must be a daunting task and yet the rewards are certainly worth the effort. Again, thank you for your continuing commitment to offering The School at the Legislature Program. Please know that you have my ongoing interest and support.

Sincerely yours,



*Lois E. Hole, CM AOE
Lieutenant Governor of Alberta*



FROM: Jacqueline Breault **Date:** July 11, 2003
Manager, Corporate Services
Financial Mgmt. & Admin. Services
901 Legislature Annex **Telephone:** 427-1359

TO: The Honourable Ken Kowalski
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
325 Legislature Building

RE: School-at-the-Legislature Program

I am writing to express my support for the School-at-the-Legislature program that the Legislative Assembly Office, under your leadership and with your support, has run for the past three years. Besides offering Grade 6 students from across the province an opportunity to experience the Legislature in an intimate and interactive way, I feel that it gives us who work for the Legislative Assembly Office a chance to share our passion for the institution, our work experience and expertise, and our pride in being part of a special team of professionals in an unique environment. I believe that participating in the program is an enriching experience for both students and LAO staff.

Each time I either speak to a classroom or meet students during one-on-one interviews, I am encouraged by the energy, enthusiasm, and interest they exhibit. During the question and answer sessions, I always encounter sharp questions that keep me on my toes and prompt me to look at my work and the Legislative Assembly from a different point of view. I hope I have been able to impart an interest in my particular field of endeavour, public service, or our democratic institutions after speaking with the students.

My staff and I look forward to continued opportunities to contribute to the "School-at-the-Legislature." The VCSS staff have done a commendable job coordinating this successful program. It is a privilege to share our work experiences with these young citizens and promote understanding of the Legislative Assembly.

J.Breault

- c. Brian Hodgson, Director, Visitor, Ceremonial, and Security Services and Sergeant-at-Arms
✓ Jackie Edwards, Head of Visitor Services



MEMORANDUM

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE
GOVERNMENT HOUSE LEADER
OFFICE OF THE PREMIER

Visitor Services
Government Centre, Pedway Mall
10820 97 Avenue
Edmonton, AB T5K 2N6

School at the Legislature

July 21, 2003

Dear Diana Panizzon,

Many thanks to you, your predecessor John and Visitor Services for the chance to participate in the School at the Legislature program.

In all my years of working in both the Legislature Annex and the Legislature Building, the School at the Legislature program clearly has the highest degree of enduring educational value to both the students (and teachers) that participate and to those like myself who meet with them.

We all learn. Students learn about democracy. Teachers get to see what we do. And the people who meet with them, like myself, get reminded that there are people who walk onto these grounds and into these buildings who are genuinely wowed by what they see; because for them this is where democracy lives, is celebrated, and it is where they expect to witness democracy's fair evolution. It is good for us who work here to be reminded, in such a personal way, of what a privilege it is to serve here. It is not a one way street. Yes, students learn. But we learn too. And that's a good thing.

Thus, I warmly salute the School at the Legislature program and hope for its continued sponsorship by Visitor Services.

I can be reached at 422-4931, david.gillies@gov.ab.ca.

Regards,

David Gillies

A handwritten signature of "David Gillies" enclosed within an oval border.

Community Partners



CAPITAL CITY
SAVINGS

PRIORITY
PRINTING LTD.

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